



Father Mac (24 Oct 1930 - 24 Apr 2020) - RIP

Dear Parents / Carers, Staff and Students,

Today we mourn the sad loss of a great priest, inspirational person and dear friend, Fr Patrick McAuliffe, known to some of you as Fr Pat and known fondly to us at Mary MacKillop Catholic College Wakeley as Fr Mac. Fr Mac passed away at 9.40pm on Friday 24 April. It is fitting that I send you this letter today, ANZAC Day, the most significant day for Australia, the day each year when Fr Mac, a much loved and honoured member of the local community, was invited to lead the prayers and reflected on the meaning of ANZAC Day in Cabra-Vale Park.

Fr Mac was born on 24 October 1930 and grew up in Botany. As a young man he decided to give his life in service to God and humanity by joining the priesthood. On 21 July 1956, aged 25, Fr Mac was ordained a priest by Cardinal Gilroy at St Mary's Cathedral. His first appointment was to Surry Hills Parish and then he served the parishes of Eastwood, Pagewood, Lane Cove and Kingsgrove. His final appointment was to Sacred Heart Cabramatta where he served as Parish Priest for over 40 years and where we came to know Fr Mac.

Whilst at Cabramatta, Fr Mac made a great impact on his parishioners, the wider community and on Mary MacKillop Catholic College. Fr Mac was a kind, friendly and humble man of deep and unwavering faith. He was dedicated to Cabramatta Parish, devoting his prayers, work and life to his parishioners. He was a role model to those in the community achieving Rotary's highest award, the Paul Harris Fellowship, and the Centenary Medal for Service to the PCYC and Youth. He loved sport, especially playing and coaching basketball, and his passion was recognised when he was appointed President of PCYC Cabramatta, a position he held for over 20 years.

At Mary MacKillop Catholic College, Fr Mac will be remembered as our unofficial chaplain. From our school's beginning, Fr Mac answered the call by Bishop Gilroy to minister to us. Every other day he visited us, providing us with opportunities for Reconciliation and Mass, visiting and inspiring Religious Education classes, and speaking with the "Young Ladies" about their aspirations for the future. He always reminded our students and staff that God is always there for them and if they ever needed anything, to call on God. He always enjoyed sharing a yarn and had a wicked sense of humour.

Fr Mac recognised the importance of prayer, community and celebration. Every year, he would join Year 7 on Camp and Year 12 on Retreat. He was there to welcome our Year 7 students on their first day and farewell our Year 12 students at their Graduation and Formal. Fr Mac was much loved by our girls. Even when they left school, they asked him to prepare them for Marriage, preside at their weddings and baptise their children. He conducted the first Nuptial Marriage in St Joseph's Chapel, our College chapel.

Fr Mac so loved the Mass and the importance of being in communion with Christ. He accepted every opportunity to celebrate Mass with us and to hear the MMCC student body lift their voices in song. He enjoyed presiding at the annual Commissioning of New Students and Staff Mass where he would share a laugh with the community as he "sprinkled" us with plenty of holy water. He especially enjoyed our annual Christmas (Hamper) Mass. It brought him great joy to know the MMCC community, that he loved, shared his love for the needy by supporting the SVDP Cabramatta Chapter. Fr Mac loved teaching Year 7 students about the Mass; unpacking the meaning of each part, bringing them around the altar to witness the consecration and sharing his love of Jesus. He loved our staff, spending time with them and especially gathering them together to pray a special Mass for feast days or in memory of those who had passed.

Over the last year, we watched Fr Mac deteriorate in health but never in spirit. He would still find time to preside over Mass, spend time with our students and minister as chaplain to our staff. This year he has been unable to visit and very much missed. We are deeply saddened by his passing but glad to know that he is now with God.

Fr Mac was truly a special person who can be proud of the contribution he has made during his lifetime. Many of you are recipients of his Rosary Beads. He believed in the power of prayer, brought comfort in times of need and encouraged all to pray the Rosary. To keep his memory alive, I encourage you to pray the Rosary or say the Hail Mary, his favourite prayer which always brought him close to God.

For Fr Mac, we pray

*Eternal rest, grant unto him O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him.
May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy God,
rest in peace. Amen.*

Yours sincerely,



Gilda Pussich
PRINCIPAL

